

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

December 8, 2009

The Honorable David R. Obey
Chairman
House Appropriations Committee
H-218 U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jerry Lewis
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Committee
H-218 U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Daniel K. Inouye
Chairman
Senate Appropriations Committee
S-128 U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Thad Cochran
Ranking Member
Senate Appropriations Committee
S-128 U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

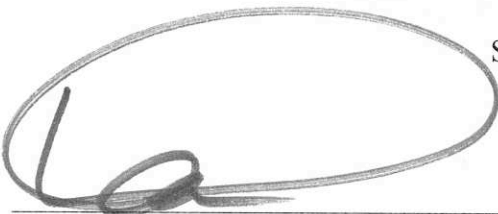
Dear Chairman Obey, Ranking Member Lewis, Chairman Inouye, and Ranking Member Cochran:

As you begin work on the conference report of the remaining FY 2010 appropriations bills, we respectfully request that you preserve the House-passed funding level of \$4.575 million for the Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander Serving Institutions (AANAPISI) program. This important new program, established by the College Cost Reduction and Access Act (P.L. 110-84), provides grants to eligible colleges and universities that serve considerable numbers of low-income and Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) students to help the schools improve and expand their services.

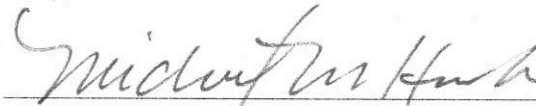
By establishing the AANAPISI program, Congress took a significant step in rejecting the "model minority" myth, which inaccurately categorizes the complex AAPI population as a homogenous, academically successful unit. According to a July 2007 GAO report on AAPIs in higher education, "viewing Asian American and Pacific Islanders as a homogenous group may mask differences in educational attainment and income among Asian American and Pacific Islander subgroups." In reality, a large number within the AAPI community fall well below national averages with respect to both income and education. For instance, in 2005, only 13 percent of Cambodians, Laotians, and Hmong had a college degree—as compared to 17.2 percent of the national population.

While we fully understand and respect the difficult budgetary environment, we strongly believe that robust funding for the AANAPISI program is critical if our nation is to provide equitable opportunities for educational achievement. We ask that you fund the Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander Serving Institutions program at \$4.575 million to help underserved students overcome barriers to a college degree and put them on the path to success.

Sincerely,



DAVID WU
Member of Congress



MICHAEL M. HONDA
Member of Congress



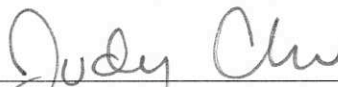
DORIS O. MATSUI
Member of Congress



FORTNEY PETE STARK
Member of Congress



RAÚL M. GRIJALVA
Member of Congress



JUDY CHU
Member of Congress



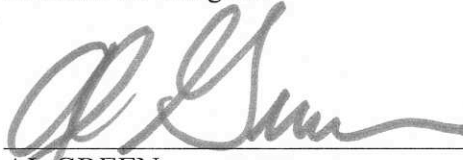
LAURA RICHARDSON
Member of Congress



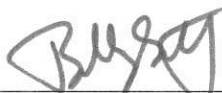
MADELEINE Z. BORDALLO
Member of Congress



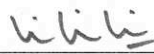
MAZIE K. HIRONO
Member of Congress



AL GREEN
Member of Congress



ROBERT C. "BOBBY" SCOTT
Member of Congress



GREGORIO SABLAN
Member of Congress



ZOE LOFGREN
Member of Congress



NEIL ABERCROMBIE
Member of Congress



Faleomavaega
Member of Congress